



**TITLE OF CASE STUDY: Inspiring Success: How Ink From Chase Is Making Its Mark**

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**BUSINESS BACKGROUND**

**Building a Business Credit Card from the Ground Up:**

Prior to the 2009 launch of the business credit card brand Ink, Chase products at the time borrowed heavily from Chase brand’s consumer orientation. However, it was time to create a brand and product set that was not simply available to businesses, but ***built for them and designed to meet the business owner needs.***

We were also developing this card in the middle of a severe recession. Given our strategic priority and faith in the product (we knew this card could really help business owners), we saw an opportunity for a bold move and to capture market share. In a time of pessimism, the launch of Ink provided inspiration for success and innovation to help small businesses.

**BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY**

How can Chase build a strong product that fulfills business owners’ needs in a distinct and emotionally poignant way?

**Our approach was to position business owners themselves at the center and heart of our research, ideas, and brand strategy.**

**Business Objectives:** Create and market a brand of business cards with **an industry leading performance and to compete strongly in the market** by building a strong affinity for the brand.

**Research Objectives:** We utilized a wide array of techniques to unearth fresh insights, focusing **both on traditional and innovative research approaches – from segmentation to metaphors to online communities** to guide and inspire us for this challenge.

1. Provide a superior understanding of business owner mindset, their motivations, wants, and needs, in order to develop a unique and ownable value proposition.
2. Develop a rich creative insight/story that can be used to build the brand position and compelling communication platforms.

## **FOUNDATIONAL INSIGHTS ON BUSINESS OWNERS**

### **Chase Business Segmentation Study: Leveraging segmentation to capitalize on differences as well as commonalities.**

In 2008, we conducted a strategic segmentation research with MaPS, the first of its kind at Chase, to understand the mindset of business owners. It profiled high-opportunity segments based on their needs, motivations, attitudes, behaviors, and firmographics – providing the foundation to our in-depth understanding of business owners.

### **Ethnographic Interviews with Business Owners: Building a richer profile of our target.**

Working with an innovation research agency, IDEO, we conducted several ethnographic interviews with business owners to better bring them to life. It was through these interviews that we were able to build on the foundation of the segmentation study. These interviews helped glean key principles and truths that became the guidelines for the brand.

### **Deep-Dive on Business Owner Emotional Mindset:**

We also further explored the core emotional values of business owners using *metaphors*, which can help uncover deep-seated belief systems. The goal was to understand these emotional triggers and employ them in communication. We used a ZMET approach with qualitative in-depth sessions among business owners.

### **How Unexpected Ideas Make Strategy Better:**

Based on these foundational insights, we were in a position to develop a strong communication strategy and execute off it. We conducted one-on-one interviews with business owners. Instead of putting small business owners in a research facility, which tends to be an artificial and less inviting environment, we conducted these groups over dinner in a restaurant lounge. This setting was more natural and was little different than having a conversation over dinner. The feedback and response for this more approachable, nontraditional setting was highly positive.

**Launch Campaign Development & Research (“Stories”)** Armed with creative insights, we developed a series of creative ideas that were illustrated in the form of storyboards, animatics, and ad lobs. For the launch campaign, our direction was to be ***bold and highly visible***.

Several creative ideas were tested iteratively in various qualitative settings, including focus groups and in-depth interviews. These helped narrow our approaches to two core concepts – “Stories” and “Sketches.” While both campaigns were different in creative approach, they complemented one another. “Stories” illustrated Ink’s ability to deliver on the unique needs of small businesses, while “Sketches” emphasized all the ways that Ink from Chase could help support your business.

### **PhaseOne: Understanding the way in which each campaign “connects” with our target.**

We analyzed the content of “Stories” and “Sketches” in a structured qualitative exercise through PhaseOne. The key messages communicated were highly relevant, especially the way that Ink from Chase could help different types of businesses (including their business) to grow.

**Millward Brown Link: Choosing the campaign with the greatest potential.**

In quantitative Millward Brown Link testing, both “Sketches” and “Stories” **scored above our aggressive action standards** based on breakthrough and persuasion. Both campaigns were predicted to be strong performers in introducing the new business brand from Chase. Based on these results, we moved forward with the “Stories” campaign.

**Building a strong, cohesive message across all platforms:** “Stories” was a multiplatform campaign: TV, Print, Online, Radio, Small business Events, PR, Direct Mail and a new brand website formed the basis. Research influenced selection of Direct Mail executions, Digital banner ads and brand website with qualitative groups. We partnered with Bloomberg to host its “Empowered Entrepreneur: Innovators Series” and for Inc. 500’s “The Way I Work: A Network and Learn Business Series.” Both events included lectures and discussions on effective business practices. Similarly, the brand website and Facebook site provided case studies of – “how-to’s” – of successful businesses, in addition to access to good networking opportunities. All efforts worked hard to ensure that the campaign was **highly integrated**.

**Second Brand Campaign (“Marlo”):** Based on the in-market success of “Stories,” we decided to feature a business owner and Ink customer to share her real-life story on her business, her inspiration, and the role Ink plays in managing her business. It featured a New York restaurateur, who started a boutique that pairs cupcakes with wine. A similar communication-development research process was conducted for our second campaign.

In addition, we developed a **branded online community**. Business owners provided rapid feedback as we were developing concept ideas. The online community has been invaluable in mining consumer insights, and in providing a setting for **ample interaction and organic conversations** that provide a rich source of inspiration and connection with our customers.

**BUSINESS RESULTS**

The strong financial success of Ink in its first year of launch is best illustrated by robust growth in business metrics. Also, our brand metrics have seen strong gains and sustained momentum.